

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the Application.

1. (Currently Amended) A down-the-hole drill assembly having a reciprocating piston with a bore extending therethrough, a length of the bore being inwardly stepped to snugly receive a closed end pressurized air distributor tube having an apertured sidewall, an upper chamber for pressurized air to cause downward travel of the piston, a lower chamber for pressurized air to cause the piston to lift and a drill bit with an inner end, body and face, ~~[[wherein]]~~ the inner end of the bit ~~[[is]]~~being closed and exhaust passages ~~[[are]]~~being provided from the upper and lower chambers past the inner end of the bit and through the body of the bit to exit through the bit face, wherein the piston is movable between a driving position in which the bore step is open and the distributor aperture is in flow communication with the piston bore, and a lifted position in which the bore step is closed by the distributor and the aperture is in flow communication with the upper chamber.

2. (Previously Presented) A drill assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein the exhaust passages exit via at least one vent extending through the bit body from the bit face.

3. (Previously Presented) A drill assembly as claimed in claim 1 wherein the bit has openings extending transversely through the body of the bit into a blind bore extending from the bit face.

4. (Previously Presented) A drill assembly as claimed in claim 3 wherein a flushing air orifice extends through the closed inner end of the bit.

5. (Previously Presented) A drill bit for the down-the-hole drill assembly as defined in claim 1.